

ELI W. GOFF.

[To accompany Bill S. No. 113.]

APRIL 20, 1860.

Mr. MAYNARD, from the Committee of Claims, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred Senate bill No. 113, "for the relief of Eli W. Goff," have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report:

That the claimant was a deputy collector of customs in the northern portion of Vermont, and by great energy succeeded in breaking up a powerful gang of smugglers. The result was a series of annoyances and costly litigation forced upon the petitioner, through the influence and procurement of the parties whose illegal though profitable employment he had broken up. Even the property he had lawfully seized under the revenue laws was again wrested from him by the connivance of the United States district attorney, who dismissed the suits for forfeiture, and, in lieu thereof, involved the petitioner in law which eventually resulted in his pecuniary ruin.

At the first session of the last Congress this claim was fully investigated, and a bill passed authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to audit and pay whatever he might ascertain Mr. Goff's losses to have been, limiting the amount, however, to five thousand dollars, although the claim was for near thirteen thousand dollars. The Secretary of the Treasury, finding a difficulty in bringing the evidence within the strict rules of the department, failed to fix upon any amount, and the Senate bill now before your committee determines the amount arbitrarily, at thirty-five hundred dollars.

As from the very nature of the circumstances surrounding this claim, the evidence would be informal and incomplete, so as not to be within the rules established by the executive departments, yet your committee are satisfied that the losses and sacrifices of Mr. Goff have been much larger than the amount named in the bill, nevertheless, they report the bill back without amendment, and recommend its passage.

